



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

Fish and Wildlife Service

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SERVICE APPROVES BISMUTH SHOT FOR REMAINDER OF 1994-95 HUNTING SEASON

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service today announced it has granted conditional approval for use of bismuth-tin shot for the remainder of the 1994-95 waterfowl hunting season.

The conditional approval was granted only for the rest of the current hunting season after the Service reviewed and approved results of initial testing conducted by the Bismuth Cartridge Company's which found the shot was not toxic when ingested by waterfowl. For bismuth-tin shot to be approved for the 1995-96 season, the manufacturer must complete two longer-term toxicity tests and develop a detection device for field use by law enforcement personnel.

Bismuth-tin joins steel as the only types of shot that currently are approved for waterfowl hunting. Lead shot was phased out for waterfowl hunting because it is toxic to birds that ingest it accidentally while feeding.

The Bismuth Cartridge Company petitioned the Service in June 1994, requesting the Service legalize the use of bismuth-tin shot on an interim, conditional basis. The petition acknowledged the company's responsibility to complete three studies to determine the effects of ingested bismuth-tin shot on waterfowl.

The Service issued a proposed rule in August to grant the petition pending completion of the required studies.

For permanent approval, the company must submit the results of a chronic 14-week toxicity test in cold weather using a nutritionally-deficient diet and a chronic dosage study that includes reproductive assessment.

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